



Administrative Services Department RISK MANAGEMENT/SAFETY DIVISION

SAFETY NEWSLETTER

Weekly Safety Tip



NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL SAFETY TIPS

- ♦ Properly inflated tires are safer and more efficient. Make sure to check tire pressure and tread depth at least once month.
- ♦ If you believe that someone has taken more medication than the recommended dosage, call the nationwide poison control center at 1-800-222-1222, and if possible, bring the medication container to the phone.
- ♦ Be mindful of how to prevent choking this holiday: eat slowly, chew sufficiently and do not engage in other activities while eating. It's also important to supervise young children while they eat.
- ♦ Never use a generator inside your home, garage, crawl space, or other enclosed area. Fatal fumes can build up, that neither a fan nor open doors and windows can provide enough fresh air.

SAFETY IS ...

AWARENESS

COMMITMENT

TIME

INITIATIVE

OPPORTUNITY

NEVERENDING

Ergonomics

What is ergonomics? It is the practice of arranging the workplace environment to fit employees so they can perform their jobs without getting injured. It's also making sure that you don't physically over exert your body. When ergonomic practices are correctly applied in the work environment, musculoskeletal discomfort (MSD), such as general aches and pains and fatigue, are reduced dramatically. Reducing stress on your body will help eliminate many injuries associated with overuse of muscles, awkward positions and repetitive motions that could cause musculoskeletal disorders.

Who's most at risk? Excessive or repetitive physical demands placed on your body cause MSDs...and just about every employee will experience at least one work-related MSD in his or her lifetime. One out of every three MSDs are serious enough to result in lost work time. The majority of work-related MSDs involve jobs that expose you to one or more the following risk factors:

Repetition: Repeating the same motion every few seconds for two hours at a time, or using a keyboard, mouse or other device continuously for more than four hours daily.

Forceful exertions: Lifting more than 75 pounds at any one time. Pushing or pulling with more than 20 pounds of initial force. For instance, pushing a 65-pound box across a floor for more than two hours a day. Or, pinching or gripping heavy objects more than two hours a day.

Awkward positions: Working with your hands above your head, bending your back, neck, or wrists, and kneeling or squatting for more than two hours a day.

Contact stress: Working with tools that have finger grooves on the sides, such as hammers and unpadded pliers, for long periods of time.

Vibration: Using tools or equipment with high vibration levels such as chainsaws or

jackhammers for more than 30 minutes a day or devices with moderate vibration like jigsaws or grinders for more than two hours a day.

When should you report MSD symptoms?

Everyone experiences pain or stiffness after working hard from time to time. This doesn't mean every injury you have will lead to an MSD. You should become concerned if your injuries don't go away and the symptoms also include numbness, burning or tingling.

Who do you call?

Contact the Risk Management/Safety Division to arrange for an ergonomic evaluation of your work place. Most often, simple adjustments in your workplace can transform a hazardous environment into a safe one.

Safety Classes:

Some of the classes offered by the Risk Management Safety Division are listed below:

- Defensive Driving
- First Aid/CPR
- Hazardous Communication
- Fork Lift Training
- Flagging
- Confined Spaces
- Blood Borne Pathogen; Etc.

Please talk to your supervisor about what certifications are needed for your specific job and duties. Supervisors are required to ensure that you receive the proper training to perform your job safely and effectively.

Risk Management / Safety Division		ext#
Mike P. Lujan	Risk Management / Safety Division Director	5620
Debbie Rouse	Safety Manager	5625
Carlos Ramirez	Safety Specialist	5622
Diane Wentworth	Safety Specialist	5636
Henry Aranda	Special Projects Administrator	5626
Barbara Boltrek	Claims Administrator	5627
Darlene Ortega	Risk & Safety Administrative Coordinator	5621

WORKING IN **COLD** WEATHER



For many people, working or playing in cold weather can be a positive experience. You may feel invigorated by the bracing air and feel like doing your work with more physical energy than usual. When it comes to leisure, cold weather offers many enjoyable activities whether it's skiing, skating, snowmobiling or ice fishing. Unfortunately, all the enjoyable aspects of working or playing out in cold weather can turn negative if you are not dressed warmly or dryly enough.

Here at the City, it is the responsibility of the supervisor to determine the potential for cold stress based on planned work activities, the weather forecast, and clothing required before their employees start work. A discussion should be held during a pre-job brief or safety meeting regarding the possibility of cold stress.

There are many things you can do to dress properly for the cold:

Over exposure to cold and dampness can cause your body temperature to lower. This condition is called hypothermia. You may have it

when you start to shiver and experience chills, or find yourself unable to think or speak clearly. You may lose your coordination and quite possibly your consciousness. You could also get frostbite, which is when your body tissue freezes. Frostbite happens most frequently to your extremities like your feet and toes, fingers, face and nose. Symptoms include numbness and a white and waxy appearance to your skin.

- Dress in layers so you can remove or put on clothing according to the temperature.

- Always wear a warm hat on your head – this is the part of the body that loses heat the fastest. There are also liners you can wear to keep your head



warm under a hard hat or other kinds of protective headgear. Consider wearing a knitted facemask to deflect cold and wind chill.

- Wear waterproof, insulated boots with several layers of socks - preferably cotton ones

under wool. They enable your feet to breathe. When your socks or boot liners become wet, remove and replace them.

- Always wear warm gloves or mitts. Some gloves have liners which, if wet, should be removed and replaced.

In addition to dressing properly for cold conditions, it's important to eat regularly when you are out in the cold, especially foods high in carbohydrates and fats. Your body requires an enormous number of calories to shiver and keep warm. Avoid alcohol, contrary to the popular image of the St. Bernard dog delivering brandy to warm a frozen victim.

Try to keep moving while in the cold; don't be still. This helps to keep your body temperature up and circulation moving. If you think you are experiencing symptoms of hypothermia or frostbite, get to a shelter right away and seek medical help. When you work or play in the cold, it is a good idea to have a co-worker or companion with you. What if you were to become injured or over-exposed to the cold and couldn't seek help yourself?



THE SILENT KILLER Carbon Monoxide

Winter is here and the cooler weather prompts residents to fire up their furnaces. Underwriters Laboratories Inc. (UL), the not-for-profit product safety testing organization, is urging homeowners to purchase carbon monoxide (CO) alarms and replace the batteries in existing CO alarms.

Called the silent killer, CO is an odorless, colorless gas produced by incomplete burning of fuel, such as propane, kerosene, gasoline, oil, natural gas, wood and charcoal. Sources of CO in homes can include malfunctioning gas-fired appliances, space heaters and chimney flues. Each year, more than 450 people die from accidental carbon monoxide poisoning, most of them (64 percent) inside homes, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Symptoms of CO poisoning include nausea, fatigue, headaches, dizziness, breathing difficulty and confusion -- but they are general enough to be confused with the flu, according to Dr. Jerrold Leikin, director of Medical Toxicology for Evanston Northwestern Healthcare in Illinois. CO alarms are designed to alert residents before carbon monoxide concentrations grow to toxic levels, often giving homeowners hours of advance notice.

"A CO alarm should not be confused with a smoke alarm," said John Drengenberg, manager of Consumer Affairs for UL. "A smoke alarm tells you to get out immediately. A CO alarm warns of a potential poisoning risk, usually long before symptoms are apparent, which allows you time to get help. You need both life safety devices in your home."

For more information about CO alarms, smoke alarms and fire safety, go to:

<http://www.ul.com/consumers/monoxide.html>

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